

The Ballarat Naturalist

SEPTEMBER 2012



FIELD NATURALISTS' AUGUST 2012 EXCURSION TO DEREEL.

About fifteen members and visitors arrived at Tim D'Ombra's block in Snowgum Road, Dereel for our excursion. Tim explained how he was able to purchase this block of twenty acres of land that had only been lightly grazed, so that most of the original native species of plants and trees have



Tim and Kristen at Dereel

survived. He said that the area near the road would be classified as grassy woodland. Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* and Weeping Grass *Microlaena stipoides* were among the grasses seen. One of the many plants that Tim was able to identify was Austral Adders Tongue *Ophioglossum lusitanicum*. This fern-like plant has only one or two fronds arising together. The young parts do not unroll like true ferns.

One of the first orchids seen was the Tiny Greenhood *Pterostylis parviflora*. Sundews were plentiful, but we did not see any in flower until later in the day. Tim showed us a large snowgum that had a hollowed out trunk about 2.5 metres across at the base. This tree was surrounded by young snowgum saplings. Tim's partner Kristin was involved in a survey of snowgums undertaken in 2008 for Natural Resource Management. A few specimens of the *Enteloma* fungi were noted. The dark grey conical caps have a dimple in the centre. The stem was also dark grey and the gills had a pink tinge caused by the maturing spores. Other plants seen nearby included the Erect Guinea-flower *Hibbertia riparia* and Peach Heath *Lissanthe strigosa* which had red flower buds. Small Grass-trees *Xanthorrhoea minor* were also plentiful in places.

We moved to a different area where the soil was sandy. Tim said that this area was classified as damp sand herb rich woodland. Scentbark *Eucalyptus aromaphloia*, Prickly and Silky Tea-trees, *Lepidospermum continentale* and *L.myrsinoides* and Black Sheoak *Allocasuarina littoralis* grew in this area. Twining Fringe-lily *Thysanotus patersonii* was seen among the small grass-trees. A pale fawn coral fungi *Ramaria sp.* was seen on the sandy ground. One large Swamp Gum had numerous hollows for nesting birds and possums. In an area of bracken we found the Nodding Greenhood *Pterostylis nutans* and the Tall Greenhood *P.longifolia*. Helmet Orchid leaves were also found here. On the deep sand the Rough-barked Manna Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis subsp. cygnetensis* was growing. Leaves of the Chocolate lily *Arthropodium strictum* and the Yellow Rush-lily *Tricoryne elatior* were also seen. Tim's knowledge was invaluable when trying to indentify plants that were not in flower. Kristin asked me to indentify an unusual fungus which consisted of individual velvety black spikes to 50mm tall and up to 10mm thick. These were the Earth Tongue *Geoglossum sp.*

Near some Cherry Ballarts were some Pink Bells *Tetratheca ciliata* and the Common Flat-pea *Platylobium obtusangulum*. Tim was hoping to find some Parson's Bands in this area but it was probably too late for them. In an area with little grass Tim pointed out some small plants that included *Stylidium inundatum*, *Convolvulus erubescens*, Yellow Pennywort *Hydrocotyle foveolata*, Yellow Star *Hypoxis vaginata* and the Pink Bladderwort *Urtricularia tenella*. At the start of the excursion Tim gave me a list of over 120 native plants on his block. We saw a good proportion of the ones on the list.

After lunch we left Tim and Kristin and headed into Dereel. Our leaders

for the afternoon, Bill and Paul, took us to a block off Swamp Road about a kilometre west of the Dereel Hall. This area had been control burnt about eighteen months ago. Here among the bracken we found Helmet Orchids *Corybas incurvus* in flower. Other orchids seen were the Nodding Greenhood, a large flowered Striped Greenhood *Pterostylis alata* and a midge orchid *Acianthus* sp. The white flowered Scented Sundew had flowers open despite the cloudy weather. We moved around the block to Swanston Road. On a flat area with few trees we saw Common Beard-heath *Leucopogon virgatus* in flower. White flowered Pink Heath *Epacris impressa* was in flower beside the road. A male Scarlet robin as well as Grey Shrike-thrush and White-throated Tree-creeper were seen at this spot.

Les Hanrahan

SEANA CAMP

Bendigo hosted the SEANA spring camp from 17-20 August. Evening meals and guest speakers were held in the Mandurang Hall on the south eastern edge of Bendigo.

On Friday night Rob Moors gave an historical outline of the area touching on geological periods, aboriginal occupation, grazing, mining, railway and water supply. This led to an explanation of the natural vegetation types which we would visit over the weekend. The evening concluded with Peter Ellis explaining the development of dance music which he played on button accordion, concertina, tin whistle and harmonica.

Speakers on Saturday night titled their presentation *Moth Magic*. Marilyn Hewish spoke about her interest in moths leading to working on the series of books *Moths of Victoria*. She showed many interesting and bizarre species photographed on moth-hunting travels. Steve Williams has discovered details of moth life cycles by growing many of the local species of moths from eggs or larvae, finding the food-plants and habitats on which they rely, vital information for moth conservation. With the assistance of Ken Harris lights were set up next to vertical sheets to attract moths.

On Sunday night Jenny Shield spoke of her study of spiders on an irrigation farm near Cohuna. Using pitfall traps she surveyed the spiders species found in irrigated pasture, shelter belts and remnant vegetation. Shelter belts and remnant vegetation had the greatest diversity of spiders, generally species which hunt their prey, while species living in pasture build flat webs below the vegetation.

Excursions covered a range of interests including vegetation, birds, geology, fossils, wetlands, forest management, mammals and history. On Saturday I went on an excursion to the Kamarooka and Whipstick sections of Greater Bendigo National park to the north of Bendigo. We were shown a variant of *Grevillea rosemarifolia*. Flower colours on the few remnant plants ranged



Variant of *Grevillea rosemarifolia*

through shades of green, yellow and red. Botanists are studying the plants which may be classified as a separate species. In a patch of Mallee the diagnostic features of the 4 species of Mallee (Kamarooka, Bull, Blue and Green) were explained. Dwarf Greenhood *Pterostylis nana* and Large Striped Greenhood *Pterostylis robusta* were found. Two plants of the rare Common Sour Bush *Choretrum glomeratum* were shown to us. These broom-like shrubs appearing leafless are well hidden amongst the mallee. Patches of the forest were yellow with Whirrakee Wattle contrasted against the dark bark of Red Ironbark. On roadsides we looked at plants near the southern edge of their range including Desert Cassia *Senna artemoides ssp nemophila*, Long-leaf Emu-bush *Erimophila longifolia* and several *Myporum* species. A good patch of flowering shrubs in the Whipstick included the showy Rosy Beackea *Euryomyrtus ramossima*.



Grey Box scar tree

The Welsford Forest excursion on Sunday first traveled to Eppalock Reservoir. In a bushland area two grey Box trees had scars on their trunks where bark had been removed. Blue Caladenia were flowering and Blue-faced Honeyeater and Musk Lorikeets were flying overhead. At the Dam wall we heard that in January 2011 water level was 2 metres over the main spillway and 1 metre over the emergency spillway causing severe erosion down stream. At Axedale, adjacent to the cemetery, the woodland on sand was dominated by Yellow Gum and Mealy Bundy with Rough, Spreading and Golden Wattle flowering. In the Welsford Forest we were



Local Wirrakee wattle on the left, a hybrid wirrakee/golden wattle form in the middle and golden wattle on the right. (Photo: Val Hocking)

shown one old Red Ironbark which had escaped felling, all the other trees were copice regrowth or a younger tree grown from seed. Blue Caladenia *Caladenia caerulea* and Leopard Orchid *Diuris paladina* flowering. Wattles included the rare Ausfeld's Wattle *Acacia ausfeldii* with white dots on the phyllodes; and *Acacia difformis* which produces few seeds but suckers freely. Later in the day we saw a Whirrakee Wattle and a Golden Wattle growing about a metre apart and between them was a hybrid of the two. It was a more robust plant with linear

phyllodes longer and wider than Whirrakee. An area burnt in autumn showed the common damage done to coppice regrowth when fire burns the stump and the coppiced stems collapse.

The camp concluded on Monday morning at No 7 Reservoir on the southern edge of Bendigo. The Coliban Water ranger spoke of the history of the reservoir built in 1861 but now decommissioned and managed as a recreation and conservation area. Stuffed museum specimens of birds and mammals collected and prepared by the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club were displayed.



Red Ironbark felled by controlled burn

Thanks to the members of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club for conducting a well organized and interesting SEANA camp.

Report and Photos: John Gregurke

RARE PLANTS OF SOUTH WEST OF MELBOURNE: TIM D'OMBRAIN

Tim attended the August meeting with Kristin Moonie and spoke of a survey of rare and threatened plants in an area to the south west of Melbourne that included natural sites as far west as about Great Western and sites in the Otways. A team of five people including Tim, Janet Leversha, Roger Thomas, Kristin Moonie and Ian Castle carried out the survey over a period of three months in the spring of 2011. The work was done for the Department of Sustainability and Environment who provided a list of 42 plants to be surveyed, although from the start it was expected that 13 of these would not be found in the survey area. The work, in the time provided, located 29 species. The only information provided was the list so research was required to profile the habitat of each species and plan excursions within the window of time available to match the flowering times of the plants being sought. The statistics of records made were impressive. In all 25,380 plant species records matched to 14,915 photographs were made using clever technology which enabled efficient recording of sightings matched by automatic GPS references to photos. The survey involved 180 person days over 4 months visiting 497 sites, 435 habitat zones to record 1123 different plants.

Tim's talk then described each of the species surveyed with notes on habitat and where it was located. Each species discussed was accompanied by clear pictures usually showing the habitat and close up view and also an image with a map of the distribution. The plants described were:

| Species | Where sighted |
|--|--|
| <i>Acacia nano-dealbata</i> [Dwarf silver wattle] | Bullato Plateau, Otways, Mt Macedon |
| <i>Acacia rostriformis</i> [Bacchus Marsh varnish wattle] | Long Forest, Bacchus Marsh |
| <i>Boronia nana</i> var. <i>pubescens</i> [[Dwarf boronia] | Mt Cole, Grampians |
| <i>Bossiaea cordigera</i> [Wiry bossiaea] | Bullato Plateau, Wombat Forest, Lorne area |
| <i>Caladenia australis</i> [Southern spider orchid] | Aireys Inlet |
| <i>Caladenia venusta</i> [Large white spider orchid] | Otways |
| <i>Caladenia vulgaris</i> [Slender pink-fingers] | Fairhaven, Lorne, Anglesea |
| <i>Dianella amoena</i> [Matted flax-lily] | Bullengarook, Ballyrogan, riddles Creek, New Gisborne, Morrisons |

| | |
|--|---|
| Dianella sp. aff. longifolia (Benambra) [Arching flax-lily] | Darley, Raglan, Ballyrogan, Chepstowe |
| Eucalyptus aff. baueriana [Werribee blue -box] | Lerderderg/Werribee River catchment |
| Eucalyptus aff. goniocalyx [Brisbane Ranges bundy] | Brisbane Ranges |
| Eucalyptus aff. willissii (South-western Vic.) [South coast peppermint] | Between Aireys Inlet and Anglesea |
| Eucalyptus aggregata [Black gum] | Woodend |
| Eucalyptus brookeriana [Brookers gum] | Bullarto Plateau, Otway Ranges, Wombat Forest |
| Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. connata [Melbourne yellow gum] | Brisbane Ranges, Lerdergerg |
| Eucalyptus litoralis (sp. aff. cypellocarpa Anglesea) [[Otway grey-gum] | Otways (extensive between Anglesea and Aireys Inlet |
| Euryomyrtus ramosissima subsp. prostrata) [Rosy baeckea] | Otways |
| Geranium sp. 3 [Pale-flower cranes-bill] | Potential specimens at Meredith, Elaine |
| Grevillea bedgoodiana [Enfield grevillea] | Enfield |
| Grevillea steiglitziana [Brisbane Ranges grevillea] | Brisbane Ranges, Werribee Gorge State Park |
| Leiocarpa gatesii [Wrinkled buttons] | Between Aireys Inlet and Lorne |
| Oleria pannosa subsp. cardiophylla [Velvet daisy-bush] | Brisbane Ranges (south part), Point Addis |
| Schoenus turbinatus [Top bog-sedge] | Inland from Anglesea and Aireys Inlet |
| Thelymitra benthamiana [Blotched sun- orchid] | Anglesea, plus Grampians, Port Campbell, Wilson Prom., Otways from previous records |
| Thelymitra matthewsii [Spiral sun- orchid] | Wensleydale, previous recorded in Otways, Grampians and Mallacoota |
| Thelymitra pallidiflora (sp. aff. pauciflora coastal) [Pallid sun-orchid] | Anglesea, Previously recorded from Pt Addis to Anglesea |
| Thomasia petalocalyx [Paper flower] | Pt Addis to Aireys Inlet, |
| Zygophyllum billardiarei [Coastal twin- leaf] | Pt Addis |

The talk finished with a table showing the number of records for each species that was surveyed. The sightings ranged from one for the southern spider orchid, *caladenia australis* which was seen in the Otways at Airey's Inlet to 1165 sightings for the Brisbane Ranges grevillea, *Grevillea steiglitziana*. Whilst the survey was about rare plants, some were certainly very rare. In all, nine of the species surveyed yielded 20 or less sightings.

Tim indicated his enjoyment with the project despite the need to record and manipulate an enormous amount of data. The presentation was a pleasure to listen to and watch, particularly seeing the photographs and hearing about where these rare plants are located.

Tim advised that Kristin had developed the presentation and she had certainly prepared a comprehensive and well sequenced production with a wealth of information. Thanks to her and to Tim for sharing this knowledge.

Tim and Kristy then led us on the Sunday to their snowgum block at Dereel and a report of this enjoyable excursion is also in this newsletter.

Peter Dalman

Friends of Kooyoora Wildflower Show Sat & Sun 15&16 Sep2012

9.30am to 4pm RheolaHall, Inglewood-Rheola Rd, Rheola

Extensive display of local indigenous flora, complimentary displays, guided wildflower tours, photographic competition, light refreshments and barbeque lunch available.

Adults \$5, Family \$10.

Wildflower tours lasting 90min at 10.15am and 1.30pm
(limited seats cost \$2).

Further information:

<http://www.kooyoorafriends.com.au>

Part of Naturally Loddon Festival.

Feminine wiles are nothing to carp about

Nicky Phillips
SCIENCE

CHASING ladies can be a deadly game for some males.

NSW scientists have come up with a novel way of exploiting a male's sexual weakness to capture one of the state's most destructive pests.

Carp, a large introduced freshwater fish that poses a serious threat to native species in NSW rivers, have a very acute sense of smell and use pheromones to communicate with each other.

When females are ready to spawn they release a pheromone that attracts males to them.

Scientists have isolated the key chemical in the pheromone and are placing it in small devices surgically implanted into female fish to lure males into a trap.



Dean Gilligan, a senior research scientist with the project, said they could manipulate the fish's behaviour by introducing specific pheromones into the environment.

"Because [the males] are driven to find the sexually receptive females, their inhibitions about entering traps should be reduced as well," said Dr Gilligan, from NSW Industry & Investment, a partner in the project.

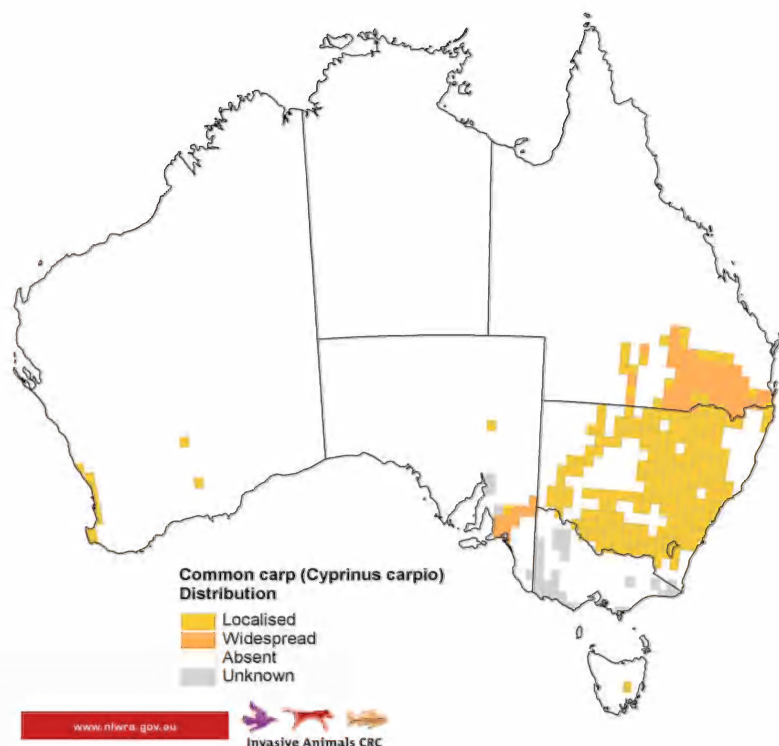
In the wild, females produce the chemical for only up to half an hour. With a slow-release pump implant, however, they can release it for at least two weeks.

The researchers set up their first trial at Hillston on the lower Lachlan River last week and will monitor it for 10 days. Dr Gilligan believes the catch rate will be much higher than standard nets.

Carp make up 80 per cent of the biomass of most inland river systems. "Once they enter an environment they change the nature of the habitat and make it less suitable for native species to survive," Dr Gilligan said.

CARP - A PEST IN OUR RIVERS, A PET IN THE FISH POND!

This article from a Sydney paper was submitted by a member. It emphasizes the problems of carp in our river systems. The map below show the distribution of the common carp in Australia - particularly in NSW where the scientists are concentrating their experiment..



<http://www.feral.org.au/carp-national-maps-200607/>



FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB OF BALLARAT INCORPORATED
No. A0014919P ABN 13 150 403 135

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Primary Industries Training Centre
August 3rd 2012

1. Opening and Apologies.

Attendance: The president Peter Dalman welcomed 25 members & visitors.

Apologies : Elaine Gregurke, Helen Burgess *Moved: Paul Norquay Seconded: John Gregurke. Carried.*

2. Minutes of previous meeting: read & accepted. *Moved: Les Hanrahan Seconded: Elspeth Swan. Carried.*

3. Business Arising from Previous Meeting:

TAFE Horticultural courses have not been cut so our accommodation is secure for 2013.

4. Correspondence.

IN:

- Castlemaine Naturalist July 2012 / Field Nats News August 2012
- Bendigo Bank Statement, notice of internet banking details
- Uni of Ballarat – invitation to participate in open day at Gillies St & Mt Rowan Sunday August 26th to promote their horticulture, ag and sustainability courses – which have NOT been cut under Baillieu's TAFE massacre. Also phone call. Briefing 6pm at Gillies St campus Tuesday 24th July.
- Victorian Naturalist June 2012 / Ballarat West Growth Area newsletter
- City of Ballarat – Notice that Amendment C138 to Ballarat Planning Scheme has been approved.
- CSIRO Publishing - Plants of the Victorian High Country – flyer.
- Email - Reminder: Volunteer Grants 2012 Applications close 5:00pm, 25 July 2012. From Catherine King's Office.
- Email: National Science Week – Open Day at Narmbool on August 18th.

OUT: Invitations for Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture via email and post.

Correspondence accepted: *Moved: Claire Dalman, Seconded: Chris Baulch. Carried.*

5. Business Arising from Correspondence: Carol attended the UB briefing prior to this committee meeting and volunteered to man a table at this inaugural event held at Gillies St. The emphasis needs to be on our value as a student resource rather than recruiting members, although mature students may be interested in joining as the convenor explained that such people enrol for their own interest. We can provide a laptop display, books to sell, plant lists, and flyers with club details. John Mildren volunteered to assist. Set up time 9.30am, open 10am-3pm. BYO lunch, tea and coffee provided. Bus to the Mt Rowan campus provided at 11am & 2pm

6. Reports

- Treasurer's Report: Opening balance \$5500.81 Income \$767.28 Expenses \$64.98
Closing balance: \$6203.11 which includes \$3500 in Sandhurst interest-bearing a/c.
Les proposed that a further \$2000 be transferred to this account. Approved by committee. *Moved: Les Hanrahan Seconded: John Mildren. Carried.*
- The committee meeting held a brief discussion about donations to organisations from whom we receive appeals; VNPA and TFN most appropriate. Further decisions next meeting. The meeting approved in principle donations to such groups.

- Apollo Bay camp – 11 members enjoyed the amenities of the newly renovated Star of the Sea Convent; Maits Rest & Paradise were visited, but Marriners Falls was off limits due to severe pathway erosion. Coffee on the balcony of a downtown café was enjoyed by several members on the Sunday and a whale waved its flipper in the distance. We returned home via Lorne and took advantage of the sun on the coastal vistas before rain and mist set in.

7. General Business

- Gift of a book about the history of Werribee Gorge which we took on last month's excursion.
- Reminder of Stella B Lecture date – Sept 7th. Speaker Geoff Park. Invitations have gone out to the Mayor, local politicians, Bedggood family etc. Invitation to be emailed to all members. Reminder to bring supper.
- Gavin Cerini brought to our attention the fact that there are plans to build on the Carngham Rd Wetland – part of Ballarat Western Growth area C141. He summarised the procedure whereby Council information re this locality had become inaccurate, and in connection with Corangamite CMA and BEN is seeking to have it conserved in its entirety. Suitable letter template and documentation to be sent to Carol. **Motion: *that the Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat support action to have the Carngham Rd Wetland conserved in its entirety. Proposed: Gavin Cerini Seconded: Peter Billing. Motion carried.***
- Peter Dalman asked for member input re use of SEANA funds to be discussed at Bendigo in August.

8. Show & Tell/ Field Reports

- 30.7.12 Wayne McGuire saw 3 Caspian Terns at Lake Burrumbeet.
- 21.7.12 Dulcie Brook had wood Ducks exploring the site of last year's nest in tree stump.
- 26.7.12 Gavin Cerini reported 2 Brolgas at Haddon Racecourse Reserve.
- 1.8.12 Carol Hall saw 3 pairs Wood Ducks occupying 3 spouts in dead tree trunk at St Pat's Point.

9. **Excursion Arrangements:** Tim D'Ombrian to show us the Snowgum block until lunchtime. Then independent excursion.

10. **Syllabus Item:** Tim D'Ombrian – Rare Plants South-west of Melbourne. Peter thanked Tim for his enthusiastic presentation of research done at the behest of DSE.

11. Supper.

ANGAIR Wildflower Show -- Sat & Sun 22&23 Sep 2012

ANGAIR holds a Wildflower Weekend and Art Show in the Memorial Hall, McMillan Street, Anglesea.. The show includes spectacular displays of native flowers and opportunities for people to take guided walks and bus tours to visit the bushland and flora reserves to see indigenous flowers in their natural habitat. There are also native plants, books on environmental subjects, cards and various forms of craftwork for sale. Proceeds from the show are used for land conservation purposes.

<http://www.angair.org.au>

CALENDAR 2012

SEPTEMBER

- Fri 7 **Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture**
 Geoff Park, Knowledge Broker, North Central CMA
 Flora and Fauna of Newstead.
- Sun 9 *Wattle Day: the diversity of local wattles.* Club Members
- Tues 28 Committee Meeting, 7.30pm

OCTOBER

- Fri 5 Steve Williams, Entomologist
 Raising caterpillars to moths
- Sat 6 *Brisbane Ranges* - Elspeth Swan & Paul Norquay
- 13-21 Australian Naturalists Network - Canberra

Our Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture speaker, Geoff Park works as a Knowledge Broker with the North Central Catchment Management Authority. In this role he is responsible for the development of collaborative partnerships between researchers, policy makers, extension staff and landholders that lead to improved knowledge exchange and on-ground biodiversity outcomes. In 2009 Geoff was a member of the team which won the Australian Research Council Eureka Prize.

Committee

President Peter Dalman
 Vice-President Fran Hanrahan
 Secretary Carol Hall
 Treasurer Les Hanrahan

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|---------------------|---------------------|
| Claire Dalman | John Gregurke |
| Val Hocking | John Mildren |
| Elspeth Swan | |

Correspondence: PO Box 328W, Ballarat West, 3350

Email: Secretary: Carol Hall,
 Editors: Nina Netherway,
 Fran Hanrahan

Website: <http://fieldnatballarat.wordpress.com>

Meetings are held at the Primary Industries Training Centre, cnr Gillies and Gregory Sts, on the first Friday of the month at 7.30pm..

Excursions: Leave from the carpark at the Primary Industries Training Centre, cnr Gillies and Gregory Sts. at 9.30 unless otherwise advised.

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